Castlemaine Naturalist

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Gluepot Campout

The Birds, the Birds!

Well folks, the Gluepot trip has come and gone, leaving us with some wonderful memories, some new birds and many new plant species. We had a rather hair-raising 50 km trip into the station from the main road. The area has approximately 8 inches of rain per year, and 1 ½ of it arrived the week before we were due to camp. As a result, the track conditions were not conducive to convoy travel, including caravans and conventional vehicles (ask George about shredded rubber!).

We duly arrived at the shearing shed Headquarters to find that the Babbler and Bellbird campsites were occupied, so we were re-directed 10 km further on to Sitella campsite where there was ample room for our five assorted abodes. The camp got off to an exciting start with a welcoming committee of a "chuckle" of Chestnut-crowned Babblers in the bush at the edge of the camp, and a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring overhead.

Our daily excursions involved driving to various sections of the station and tackling walks of various lengths, taking morning tea and lunch with us and returning to camp by mid-afternoon. These trips were not without incident. We nearly lost our President on our trip to Whistler Tank. The north-south running old fence line that we followed down to the tank suddenly turned itself around and decided to run east-west on the return trip (that's Maureen's story, anyway!). Also, on the Botanical Walk around headquarters George had trouble keeping the President's attention on the Flora as she had found a "clergy" of Apostlebirds, and was intent on going walkabout again - actually, Albert and Ken went AWOL on this excursion also.

After the first chilly day the weather was kind to us, and I think an enjoyable time was had by all.

Our bird list numbered 71 species, which was quite pleasing. We counted 9 varieties of honeyeater, including Striped, Pied, Spiney-cheeked, White-fronted, Yellow-plumed and Black-eared Miner. Other interesting species included Banded Lapwing, Major Mitchell Cockatoos, Regent Parrots, Mulga Parrots,

Black-eared Cuckoo, White-browed Treecreeper, Striated Grass-wren, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Chestnut-crowned and White-browed Babblers, Chestnut Quail-thrush, Crested Bellbird, Red-lored and Gilberts Whistlers, Apostlebird and our addition to the Gluepot bird list, a Eurasian Coot!

Ken and Maureen Dredge

P.S. On leaving Gluepot we continued our holiday in the South Australian Riverland, returning via Ngarkat Conservation Park to Bordertown and the Grampians, recording a total of 160 bird species for the trip, including 22 honeyeaters. K & M.

Cockroaches and Kestrels

Albert Golden has given me a verbal summary of the things that he most delighted in - a dinosaur egg (so he reckoned, though he conceded in the end that it must be a very ancient, bleached Emu egg!), a Collared Sparrowhawk and a pair of Nankeen Kestrels not far from his camp where they had a feeding platform. Under it was a large number of legs. These were a bit of a mystery until, on the Whistler Tank track we found a number of large- very!- cockroaches, and Albert at last was able to figure out what the Kestrels had been feeding on. He also had a Boobook calling over his camp, keeping him awake for some time one night, but he tells me that the greatest thrill of his trip was seeing the Striped Honeyeater, which is a new species for him.

He'd hoped to see a number of reptiles, but the main ones we saw were the lovely little Painted Dragons. Things might have been different if the weather was warmer earlier in the week. Ed.

From the Diary of a Reluctant Outback Camper cum Incompetent Birdwatcher

Well, weatherwise the day dawned well, and I tried hard to look enthusiastic; the smile became a bit fixed and finally deteriorated into a nasty scowl as there was a bit of trouble with the camper. Finally under way and things looking good for a happy time at Gluepot. (Something about that name just held a few little doubts, but I thought I'd soldier on regardless). A pleasant drive up the Calder until the battery of the car decided to be a bit touchy, and I could just see the future - stuck in Gluepot for endless days without a hot shower - or for that matter ANY shower at all!

So, keeping that engine running, finally to Mildura to stay the night in a motel (goodbye civilization after this), and a meal at the Workingmen's - something never achieved as locals there many years ago. A new day, a new battery and things looked distinctly brighter as we headed off through thousands of hectares of vineyards towards Renmark, where a houseboat on the Murray looked exceedingly inviting. My pleas for a lovely river trip fell on deaf ears as the driver headed in a determined manner toward Waikerie. Now, a bargain had been struck prior to departure that the camper would not be opened until it was utterly necessary, and that en route the head would rest in motels or

cabins. So off we went to the campground to book into a lovely self-contained cabin, (with hot shower, of course!). Nobody at the office - just a note telling all comers to choose a site and pay later - so what of those wanting a cabin? Forget it!

We chose a shady site and I tried not to notice the smug expression on the other member of the party as we set up and relaxed with a cup of tea. By the time we met with the other members of the party (all beaming and recounting how many dozens of birds they'd already seen) I was feeling quite cheerful.

Next day, over the river on the ferry and away to the north and the unknown. How intrepid. It so happened that the area had recently had quite heavy rains, and as we neared our destination, our fearless leader found it necessary to inspect several areas of road (?) to see if it was possible to proceed. Talk about optimistic! He charged off into those gluepotty spots without hesitation, and we all trustingly followed, shlooshing around alarmingly 'til we found firm ground again.

As we paused at the old homestead area for instructions, (who in their right mind could possibly have ever agreed to live here?), our attention was drawn to the fact that a tyre on the camper was entirely shredded, and it looked as though my worst nightmare had eventuated and we were not going anywhere. Willing hands to the fore, on with the spare, and another 12 kilometres to our camping spot.

Admittedly it was a lovely spot, the pit toilets were spotlessly clean and the company was terrific - a bit boastful about their birding success I suppose, but we all have our faults!

I do have to say that they are ever patient with the likes of me, and spending ages helping me to see the elusive winged company. And WOW! when I do see a Mulga Parrot, or a Chestnut-crowned Babbler or a gorgeous robin of some sort I'm so thrilled that I could quite easily become addicted like others I could mention.

The landscape was particularly interesting and very changeable from one area to another with glorious vistas of blue, grey and green foliage with great splashes of gold acacia and many white and mauve flowers contrasting with the red soil. Lots of dear little Painted Dragons dashing about. Some great walks, many birds seen (doubtless noted for you by all the experts), and fine endings to the days with a very civilized G&T or something equally palatable as everybody discussed the day's doings before dinner.

I might have expected that this lot would be so reluctant to leave such a place that we just *had* to visit the old airstrip area on our final morning; and what was there but acres of the most fantastic array of eremophila (Emu Bush), and some huge Emus enjoying it greatly. The variation of colour in the foliage

was stunning - from glowing purple through all the bronze tinges to grey green and bright green, and flowers of brilliant red, orange, pinks, golds and limey yellows - quite spectacular.

Gosh, I'd better cease. Anyone would think I enjoyed myself!

Anon

(Anyone guessing Anon's name will be rewarded with a Smartie - as long as Phee thinks to buy some. Ed)

"A Magic Place"

Maggie Oliver has also given a verbal account of her visit to Gluepot. As a Mallee girl from way back she found the place "sheer magic". She loved the Mallees, some of which were very old with huge stumps, and the red soil. The vistas were "soft, gentle and beautiful" and she would love to go back again, but not in Summer when it would present a quite different picture with hot winds and scorching sun beating down day after day. Ed.

Wind, Walks, Showers and Sunshine

Many a time before our campout conversations started, "Gluepot?! Where's *that*?" "North of Wailkerie." "Where's *that*?" Well, I had been to Waikerie several times before, and now I can not only tell where Gluepot *is*, but have many pleasant memories of a most enjoyable few days - and a lingering ambition to go back again, but definitely not in summer!

Maggie and I took two days to do the trip, staying overnight at Ouyen, with time to really look around on the way - only the rain and cold wind rather dampened our enthusiasm. We turned off on the Millewa Road just as we got into the outskirts of Redcliffs, thus dodging Mildura completely, and seeing flocks of Cockatiel, Red-rumped Parrots and several Bluebonnets on the way to Werrimul where we turned north to Caralulup and the Sturt Highway.

Before Berri we took the road on the north side of the river with the intention of calling in at Overland Corner. I had told Maggie of this wonderful place with a tree full of Regent Parrots and a very nice walking track with Variegated Wrens and Splendid Wrens, but it had all changed - no Regents, but that could have been because we were there at lunch time, the track has been allowed to run down and we saw very little, certainly not the wrens. We had our lunch on the lawn near the ancient (1846, I think) pub.

We caught up with Dredges and Broadways at Waikerie that night and next morning Coles and Albert Golden joined us after we crossed over the river on the ferry. There was still some puddles, including one large, rather daunting one, on the way into the Information Centre, and the 66 kms took us almost two hours. Already, despite the wind, we had been totting up quite a reasonable bird list, and we were finding the Sennas (Cassias) were actually in full flower this far north. We passed through different habitats, including Mallee/Bluebush,

Mallee/ Porcupine Grass and Mallee/Senna/Daisybush, and there were wattles, emu bushes, Sugarwoods, Pittosporum, Cattlebush and a glimpse of a beautiful blue daisy bush which we saw only a few times during our stay.

First task on arriving at the Information Centre was to change the shredded tyre on Broadways' camper, which rather put a dampener on the day, and we were directed to Sitella camp, which was our last choice, but I don't think anyone really minded once we were settled in. Albert soon found a nest of Nankeen Kestrels and a Sparrowhawk and a walk during the afternoon added a few more birds and quite a few flowers to the list. Before tea time Ken came over to say there were Chestnut-crowned Babblers behind their camp, so everything was abandoned, binoculars grabbed, and we spent about twenty minutes trying to get a good view, which a couple of us succeeded in doing when the birds managed to stop long enough to have a feed.

Next day was still windy, but we set off at 8.30 to walk the Whistler Tank track, stopping on the way when White-browed Woodswallows were spotted, and some of us saw a Chestnut Quail-thrush and more babblers.

On the Whistler Tank track we passed through a patch of Belah and daisy bushes and then into Mallee. The track followed a fence line - which was a line of old fence posts, really - so we ranged away from it, just keeping it in view - though a couple of the really keen members needed to be watched as they followed elusive birds around. There were lots of birds seen on this walk, including Mallee Ringnecks, Spiney-cheeked Honeyeaters Crested Bell-birds and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills. We also saw a few more plants of the beautiful blue daisy bush.

After we got back to camp some off us drove on down to two of the dams past the old homestead and found a few waterbirds. That evening after tea Albert took us for a walk down the road in the moonlight to find some night birds with his spotlight, but all we found were hundreds of eyes at ground level belonging to various ground dwelling spiders, but we had to be quick and cunning to spot the owners.

On Tuesday we woke to a clear day and much less wind after a very cold night. We stopped at the Information Centre on our way to the Calitris Walk which is on the edge of the area that is not open to the public. While at the information Centre we took the Botanical Walk, a 30 minute self guided walk, to find out what some of the plants are in the reserve - only, being Birdos and Field Nats, it took us nearer to 80 minutes. The walk down the Callitris track was a highlight of our stay, and some of the rarer species were seen by some - Striated Grass-wrens and Red-lored Whistlers (Ken), Black-eared Miners (Maggie and Phee) and while we ate our lunch Ken had walked on and startled four Major Mitchells which came flying our way.

After lunch we decided to see if we also could see the Black-eared Miners and the Striated Grass-wrens, so we walked on to the top of the next dune. We didn't see the wrens but Maggie and Phee sighted the Black-eared Miners and a couple of us *thought* we did! We found the Calitrus area and Blue Boronia, Shrub Violet, Wiry Podelepis and Dark Turpentine bush before turning back, and George added a small snake (possibly a Whip Snake) to his list of discoveries - he nearly stood on it. During this day we also saw lots of little Painted Dragons which are similar to our local Tree Dragons, or Jacky Lizards.

On our last day before packing up to head off home we called at the old airfield, and were enchanted by the number, beauty and variety of the Emu Bushes. Albert stayed back at camp and found the Striped Honeyeater.

I certainly enjoyed my stay on Gluepot immensely, and just before Ouyen on the way home the sight of a pale, full moon, floating high above the paddocks, green in the foreground, orange towards the horizon, and above that a sky which graduated from purple/grey up through pink, yellowish green to pale duck-egg blue capped off a wonderful few days.

Rita Mills.

The Mungo Drongos

The Cole novices of Gluepot drove on to Mungo ground
With newly learned skills in twitching, what sightings could be found?
We viewed the sunset glow and then the full moon rise.
A toast with sweet champagne (!); silhouettes before our eyes!!
The pastoral degradation of lunettes was clearly seen;
With all the recent rains the bush carpet was now green.
In three days we tallied thirty sightings! including Orange Chats,
B.P.s, Cockatiels, Major Mitchells..... So..... How's that?!

John and Nina Cole

P.S. Thanks Albert, George, Ken, Maggie, Maureen, Phee and Rita.

Spring Walks

4/10/00 We held our second last spring walk at **Smiths Reef** near the Railway line. It was pleasantly warm - and, unfortunately, the mosquitoes thought so too, and decided to have a picnic. Many of the flowers were ones we had seen on previous Spring Walks, but the progression of the season could be traced by the ones such as Marianth which had almost finished, and the Spreading Wattle which *had* finished. New additions to our spring list were Rabbits Ears (Thelmitra antenifera), Tangled Guinea Flower (Hibbertia exuciates), Purplish Brown Beard (Calochilus robertsonii), Mat Bush-pea (Pultenea pedunculata), and Daphne Heath was almost in flower. Rita Mills

11/10/00 Walmer South Reserve was the destination for the last Spring Wildflower walk of the season, led by Margaret Panter.

We learnt the difference between Musky and Hooded Caledenias, as we round both growing right next to each other in several spots. The Musky's petals and sepals are normally tipped with maroon (or pink or bronze), giving a pinkish look to the orchid, where as the Hooded's appear whiter because they lack the maroon tips. Musky's (often) have a musky (off!) smell, whereas the Hooded's (sometimes) smell slightly sweet. According to the Flora of Victoria the other main differences that can be seen with the naked eye are :

	Musky *C.gracilis*	Hooded *C. cucullata*
Labellum (lip) tip	usually pale purple, pink or yellow	dark purple
Height	16 - 34cm	11-33 cm
Plant colour	green, sometimes tinged with red	reddish
Leaf width	1 - 4 mm	.5 - 2 mm
Dorsal sepal (hood)	hooded; curved; elliptic	strongly hooded; bent at 90° ; elongate - obovate
General shape	very slender	slender; flowers more compressed (i.e. squashed) from above; raceme more compact
Flowering	Sept. - Jan.	Sept. - Nov.

Plants we saw in flower -
Chocolate Lily *Arthropodium strictum*, Tangled Guinea-flower, Gold-dust Wattle, Waxlip Orchid, Twining Fringe Lily *Thysanotis pattersonii*, Hooded Caladenia, Musky Caladenia, Fairy Waxflower, Many-flowered Mat-rush *Lomandra multiflora.* Margaret Panter

Observations

• Brenda Envall reported having a Black-shouldered Kite at her place in Harcourt, and a Spotted Pardalote has been attacking its image in her window.

• Ken Dredge has seen a Black-shouldered Kite in Moonlight Flat, and Rita Mills saw one over a few days in Blakeley Road about ½ km on the town side of her place. It has been quite a while since there were any reports in the local area.

• Robin van Smeerdijk has had a very large colony of Common Bird Orchids (*Chiloglottis vallida*) (was *gunnii*) flowering under one of her apple trees near Lancefield.

• A Spotted Quail-thrush was seen by Penny Garnett in Eureka Street, Chewton in the bush area.

• George Evans was concerned and mystified at finding a pair of Rufous Whistlers dead on the ground together not far from his house. Many people thought it was probably a case of widow strike, and it may have happened while

the pair were flying together. Robyn van Smeerdijk suggested that a line of stars hung under a verandah can help stop window strike deaths.

- A Barking Owl at Barkers Creek has changed from its usual barking call to its mating call, a hair-raising scream, over the past few weeks. Geraldine Harris.
- Three Singing Honeyeaters were seen in the Castlemaine Golf Course area on 10/8 and one on 20/9. Debbie Worland.
- More Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos have been reported in the district, mainly feeding in pines; 30 - 40 at Badger's Keep on 26/9 (and some again on 17/10). About a dozen at Kalimna about the same time were reported by Rachel Legge, and Ken McKimmie reported another 4 at Chewton on 13/10 and again on 26/10. There were also Dusky Woodswallows seen at Badgers Keep and four Crescent Honeyeaters were still there on 17/10.
- Shirley Parnaby reports that towards the end of September a search to check on the Red Spider Orchids in the Expedition Pass area resulted in the location of a similar number to that of last season. In addition two of the plants had produced an extra pair growing close to the base of each. Over many years of observation of this small group Shirley has never seen this happen before.
- Also from Shirley was the report of a drive they took to Elphinstone via the road past Expedition Pass reservoir. She noticed a stick standing upright in the water where the creek enters towards the edge of the reeds. They pulled up and Shirley crept cautiously back along the bank towards the object which remained motionless. Just as she realized it did indeed resemble a Darter it spotted her and disappeared rapidly beneath the surface. She wonders if it is perhaps the same one that had been seen at the Botanic Gardens a couple of weeks previously.
- Chris Morris reported a Boobook calling in the Poverty Gully area and Debbie Worland has heard one near the Castlemaine Golf Club.
- Maureen Dredge has added a flock of about a dozen Indian Mynahs hanging around their place at Wesley Hill to her woes as she recouperates. Not the best medicine for a dedicated bird watcher!
- On the U3A walk along the Bradford Road at Maldon on 25/10 there were masses of Chocolate Lilies, Riceflowers, two "Egg and Bacon" type of peas (haven't identified them yet) and some very tall late flowering Diurus of the Golden Moths group with several flowers. It most resembled Golden Cowslips (Diurus behrii), but one clump had the edges of the tongue folded over the centre. D. behrii is rated as vulnerable. Bradford Road has a high conservation value rating. Rita Mills.

Despatch from the Heights of Shilton's Hill

Heaps of plucked rabbit fur have been found in this locality, together with the stomach and lower intestines of rabbits. Nothing else remains, neither footprints, scuffed ground nor dung of any sort. It is

likely that the bodies were brought in by air to be plucked. Three rabbits have been so processed.

Only two birds are sufficiently powerful to carry a plucked rabbit. They are the Wedge-tailed Eagle and the Powerful Owl.

In September a neighbor from the Slate Mine Valley reported a singular event; as he was in his arm chair pondering the day's events a loud crash disturbed his musings and some of the small panes in his stained glass window were broken by a very large bird flying into them. It was 6.30pm, Eastern Summer Time. He went to investigate and found a large brown bird was lying on the verandah, much harassed by Magpies. After shaking itself and tottering around it flew silently away.

The bird was reported as being very large, about 2 feet tall, very speckled and with a round face. An identity parade was organized using a Gould League bird book, which has large pictures, and the Powerful Owl was identified. Suitable habitat, a group of very large *Pinus radiata*, is nearby.

Ian Johnson

Birds at Gower School, Sun. 15 Oct.

(At a radius of 150 metres)

The weather was cool with sunny breaks. (12.45pm - 1.45pm)

Willie Wagtail
Galah
Red Wattlebird (nest with at least 2 nestlings)
Eastern Rosella (using hole in tree)
Noisy Miner
Fuscous Honeyeater
Superb Fairy Wren
Restless flycatcher
Little Lorrikeet (2 birds)
Musk Lorikeet (lots by the sound of them)
Australian Raven (2 immature birds with no white in eye)
White-browed Babbler (family of at least 4)
Dusky Woodswallow
Striated Pardalote
Purple-crowned Lorikeet (2 birds)
Rufous Songlark
Brown Treecreeper (4 - 1 possibly immature, having a short stumpy tail)
Magpie
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Welcome Swallow
Spotted Pardalote.
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater

- a very satisfying visit!

Phillip West

Castlemaine Golf-links Birds at the end of September.

Black Swan, Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck with ducklings, Little Black Cormorant, 15 Great Black Cormorants, White-necked Heron, White-faced Heron, Great Egret, Little Eagle, Lathams Snipe (3), Black-fronted Dotterel, Masked Lapwing, Bronzewing sp., Crested Pigeon, Galah, Long-billed Corella, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Musk Lorrikeet, Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey-crowned Babbler, White-browed Babbler, Crested Shriketit, Rufous Whistler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Magpie Lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Dusky Woodswallow, Magpie, Raven sp., Red-browed Finch, Welcome Swallow, Fairy Martin, Blackbird. 35 species in all.

Debbie Worland

PLANTS OF MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE

Pink Beard Heath

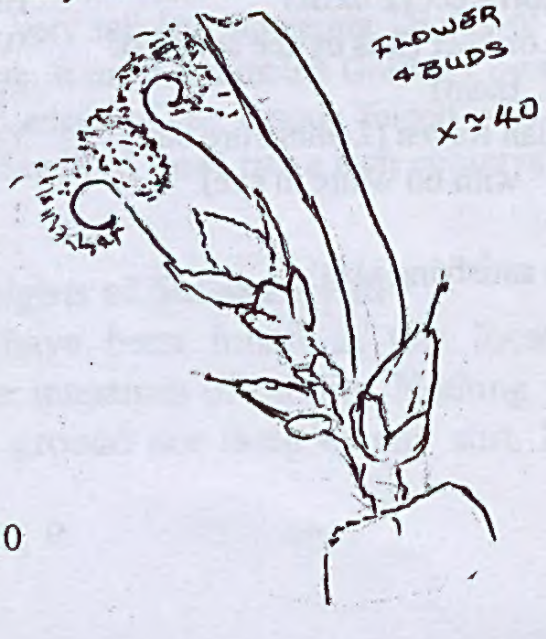
Leucopogon ericoides

Flowering time - Spring

I first saw this heath on the Spring Walk on the Chewton\Fryersown Road on 27/9. The shrub grows to 130 cm but the one we found was only about 45 cm. The dull green leaves are slightly hairy and have the margins rolled making a concave upper surface, and they have a slender point.

The buds are pink and the flowers white. A spike of three or four on very short stalks are crowded into the leaf bases. The one we found was probably in early flower as there was one flower and two or three buds in graduated development in each leaf base.

The flowers have a white bearded petals (*leuco* = white, *pogon* = beard) and a hand lens or reversed binoculars is really needed to aid identification.



FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING - Held on 26/10 .

"Nature Australia" There are a number of "Nature Australia" magazines in the Castlemaine Library which are donated by the club, and are able to be borrowed by Library members. The subscription has recently been renewed for another year and a note of thanks received from the Librarian, Pat Lakey.

He also noted that the Magazines are well used averaging, 2 borrowings a month.

Working Bee The Committee wishes to thank the people who took part in the recent Broom Pulls in the Gardens. Between the Pull in August and the one in October. The tiny plants that had been left were about 8 - 10 cm high and many bigger ones were flowering. Maintenance will need to be ongoing. Quite a number of seedlings have also been planted *during* some good rain and seem to be coming along nicely.

Glenluce Turnoff It was noted that someone has slashed the beautiful wildflowers on this triangle of land on the Glenluce turnoff on the Fryerstown/Vaughan road. The triangle was noted for the profusion of showy species and was a tourist attraction. It was suggested that if slashing was needed for safety reasons a much higher cut, and a selective cut would appear to be adequate. This is rated a high conservation value road.

The Committee voted to write to Council voicing the Club's concern, especially that the guidelines seem not to be effective. Those doing work need to be made aware of the ratings on the roads they are working on.

Newstead School Bird Survey

Newstead School applied to Birds Australia to take part in a special survey for Schools in the Box/Ironbark areas of the state. The original day for the survey happened to be the day of THE rain. Nan Newstead, teacher at the school who was in charge, decided to ring the Weather Bureau the day before and found more rain was expected, so the survey was postponed to 31/10 instead. Of the four original volunteers from the Field Nats only one was able to go, but four more were able to take the place of the other three.

The children had a particular formula to follow, and were soon organized under the leadership of an adult - two children to one adult. Four groups covered the urban area and the rest went to a property "out in the bush".

Margaret Badminton and Rita Mills joined with one teacher and a parent to cover the urban area, while Albert Golden, Robyn van Smeerdijk and Margery Cross "went bush" with another teacher and another couple of parents. All enjoyed their day, and some of the children were really enjoying birding by the end of the morning, even the ones who worked around the township, where the main birds were House Sparrows and Red Wattlebirds!

The children will now put all their information into the computer to share with other schools taking part, and to send their report to Birds Australia.

Rita Mills

PROGRAMME

EXCURSIONS **General Meetings** Are held in the Uniting church (UCA) hall, at 8.00pm on the second Friday of each month, except January. Entrances to the car parks are beside the Art Gallery and beside the Church building in Lyttleton Street. **Excursions** leave promptly at times stated, usually on the Saturday after the general meeting. There are NO excursions on TOTAL FIRE BAN days.

Business Meetings are held at 38 Campbell Street on the 4th Thursday of each month, except December, at 7.30pm. All members are invited to attend.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO CLUB MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS

Fri. Nov. 3. At the Ballarat Horticultural Centre, Kr of Gillies and Gregory Sts. Ballarat, on the invitation of the Ballarat F.N.C. The **Stella Bedgood Memorial Lecture,** the Guest speaker is **Dr. David Welch,** a senior member of Parks Canada, at present visiting research fellow at the Centre for Environmental Management, University of Ballarat. The lecture commences at 8pm.

Fri. Nov 10. Speaker is Rebecca Ramage, Mount Alexander shire **Weeds and Streamsides** Officer. UCA hall, 8pm

Sat. Nov. 11 **Terrick Terrick** All day excursion or *overnight camping.* Leave 27 Doveton St. at 9 **am.** bring lunch, snacks, etc., plus camping gear etc. of course, if you are going to camp overnight, be aware that there are no facilities other than toilets, and you will need to take water. Mitiamo is 6 kms to the south.

Sun. 19 Nov. **Mooloort Plains**. A joint excursion with Maryborough FNC Leave 13 Mostyn St at 12.30 or meet at the Brian Dowey Reserve, cr. Barringhup Road, and Midland Highway, Carisbrook at 1.15pm. Leader is Gary Cheers.

Fri. Dec. 8. **Members and Visitors Night** - including Gluepot Reminiscences. UCA hall, 8pm.

Sat Dec. 9 **Picnic tea at the Cascades, Metcalfe.** Details to be decided later.

Fri. Feb. 9 2001. **Annual Meeting.**

Sat. Feb. 10 **Bullarto Reservoir.**

Fri. . 9 - Mon. 12 Mar. **VFNCA Campout at Rawson.**

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Disclaimer - The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the club.

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Subscriptions for 2000 -

Ordinary Membership: Single ,$22 Family, $30
Pensioner or student: Single $19 Family $24
Supporting: $31

The subscription also covers postage of the 'Castlemaine Naturalist'.

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